

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 18~~ An apparatus for repairing a valve in a patient's body, the valve having a plurality of movable leaflets, the leaflets having a superior surface on a first side and an inferior surface on an opposing side, the apparatus comprising:

a pair of articulating arms coupled together and movable from an open position in which portions of the articulating arms are spaced apart to a closed position in which the portions of the articulating arms are closer together, said arms being configured to engage the inferior surfaces of the leaflets and hold the leaflets in a coapted configuration in which portions of the superior surfaces are facing each other;

wherein the articulating arms are implantable in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in the coapted configuration;

a control mechanism operatively coupled to the articulating arms and adapted to open and close the pair of articulating arms, wherein the arms can be closed to engage the leaflets and thereafter be opened to allow release of the leaflets;

a central member detachably coupled to a shaft adapted for delivering the articulating arms into the heart, the articulating arms being movably coupled to the central member; and

a pair of superior elements movably coupled to the central member, the superior elements being configured to engage the superior surfaces whereby the leaflets may be pinched between the articulating arms and the superior elements and wherein the superior elements are

resiliently biased into an extended configuration in which portions of the superior elements are spaced apart from the central member for engaging the superior surfaces of the leaflets.

21. - 66. (Canceled).

67. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 60; An apparatus for repairing a valve in a patient's body, the valve having a plurality of moveable leaflets, the leaflets having a superior surface on a first side and an inferior surface on an opposing side, the apparatus comprising:

a pair of articulating arms coupled together and being moveable from an open position in which portions of the articulating arms are spaced apart to a closed position in which the portions of the articulating arms are closer together, the arms being configured to engage the inferior surfaces of the leaflets and hold the leaflets in a coapted configuration in which portions of the superior surfaces are facing each other;

a control mechanism operatively coupled to the articulating arms and adapted to open and close the pair of articulating arms; and

a pair of superior elements movably coupled, the superior elements configured to engage the superior surfaces whereby the leaflets may be engaged between the articulating arms and the superior elements,

wherein the articulating arms and superior elements are moved independently of one another and can be closed to engage the leaflets and thereafter be opened to allow release and recapture of the leaflets prior to implantation in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in the coapted configuration.

68. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1; An apparatus for repairing a valve in a patient's body, the valve having a plurality of movable leaflets, the leaflets having a superior surface on a first side and an inferior surface on an opposing side, the apparatus comprising:

a pair of articulating arms coupled together and movable from an open position in which portions of the articulating arms are spaced apart to a closed position in which the portions of the articulating arms are closer together, said arms having engaging surfaces for engaging the surfaces of the leaflets and being configured to engage the inferior surfaces of the leaflets and hold the leaflets in a coapted configuration in which portions of the superior surfaces are facing each other;

wherein the articulating arms are implantable in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in a coapted configuration; and

a control mechanism operatively coupled to the articulating arms, wherein the control mechanism is adapted to open and close the pair of articulating arms, each articulating arm being independently movable, each articulating arm independently, and wherein the articulating arms can be closed to engage the leaflets and thereafter opened to release the leaflets.

69. (canceled)

70. (currently amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 60;~~ An apparatus for repairing a valve in a patient's body, the valve having a plurality of moveable leaflets, the leaflets having a superior surface on a first side and an inferior surface on an opposing side, the apparatus comprising:

a pair of articulating arms coupled together and being moveable from an open position in which portions of the articulating arms are spaced apart to a closed position in which the portions of the articulating arms are closer together, the arms being configured to engage the inferior surfaces of the leaflets and hold the leaflets in a coapted configuration in which portions of the superior surfaces are facing each other;

a control mechanism operatively coupled to the articulating arms and adapted to open and close wherein the control mechanism is adapted to open and close each articulating arm independently, independently; and

a pair of superior elements movably coupled, the superior elements configured to engage the superior surfaces whereby the leaflets may be engaged between the articulating arms and the superior elements,

wherein the articulating arms and superior elements can be closed to engage the leaflets and thereafter be opened to allow release and recapture of the leaflets prior to implantation in the patient's body to maintain the leaflets in the coapted configuration.

71. (canceled)